

needs to be strengthened in practical ways. And the Nation's rate of unemployment is now 6 percent—and significantly higher in some parts of America. We will not rest until every person in America who wants to work can find a job.

The new Congress that convenes next month will have a responsibility to address these challenges, and I will be making specific proposals to increase the momentum of economic recovery through a jobs and growth package.

The last Congress also left behind some unfinished business. The House and Senate passed different bills extending unemployment benefits. However, no final bill was sent to me extending unemployment benefits for about 750,000 Americans whose benefits will expire on December the 28th. These Americans rely on their unemployment benefits to pay for the mortgage or rent, food, and other critical bills. They need our assistance in these difficult times, and we cannot let them down.

I have shared these concerns with leaders of the House and the Senate, and they understand the need for early action. When our legislators return to the Capitol, I ask them to make the extension of unemployment benefits a first order of business. And the benefits they approve should be retroactive, so that people who lose their benefits this month will be paid in full. I've also directed the Department of Labor to work with the States to minimize any delay in helping these Americans once Congress has acted and extended these benefits.

I look forward to working with Members of both parties in the new Congress on our economic challenges. We must help our fellow citizens who have lost their jobs. And we must create an environment in which businesses, especially small businesses, can grow and generate the new jobs our country needs.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:02 a.m. on December 13 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 14. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 13 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also re-

leased a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Appointment of Thomas H. Kean as Chairman of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States

December 16, 2002

I am pleased to announce that Thomas H. Kean, former Governor of New Jersey and president of Drew University in New Jersey, will serve as Chairman of the national commission to investigate the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the events that led up to it.

Tom Kean is a leader respected for his integrity, fairness, and good judgment. I am confident he will work to make the Commission's investigation thorough. It is important that we uncover every detail and learn every lesson of September 11th.

Governor Kean served on the Advisory Board to the President's Initiative on Race from 1997 to 1998, served as Vice Chairman of the U.S. delegation to the Fourth U.N. World Conference on Women in 1995, and led the U.S. delegation to the World Conference on Education for All in Thailand in 1990.

Statement on the Resignation of Joe M. Allbaugh as Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency

December 16, 2002

For nearly 2 years as Director of FEMA, Joe Allbaugh has served America with ability, courage, and compassion. He will continue to shepherd FEMA through its transition into the Department of Homeland Security.

After the attacks on our country, America came to know Joe as I do: He is a steady leader, a calm presence, and a man who inspires confidence in a time of crisis. I have trusted Joe in a variety of positions throughout my public life, and he has always met the highest standards of service and integrity. Laura and I wish Joe the very best in all that he does in the future.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and Negara Brunei Darussalam

December 16, 2002

President Bush and His Majesty, Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, today pledged to reinforce the friendship between the peoples of the United States and of Brunei Darussalam, and to pursue our common interests of peace, prosperity, and stability in Southeast Asia.

The two leaders recommitted themselves to the global war on terror, declaring terrorism a threat to all civilized societies and the exploitation of religion to promote violence an abomination. President Bush and His Majesty reiterated the importance of strengthening international cooperation in combating terrorism in a comprehensive manner and affirmed the importance of working with multilateral institutions, including the United Nations. The two leaders also recognized the importance of promoting tolerance and understanding amongst the diverse cultures, societies, and religions.

The President praised Brunei Darussalam's long tradition of religious tolerance and cooperation with its neighbors, friends, and partners. In the wake of the tragic Bali bombings, the President and His Majesty agreed on the need to strengthen cooperation to identify and destroy terrorist networks; exchange information and intelligence about terrorists and terrorist organizations; disrupt the movement of terrorists and the tools of terror across international borders; and cut off sources of funding for terrorist acts, especially in Southeast Asia. His Majesty welcomed President Bush's offer to assist Brunei Darussalam in building its capacity to counter terrorism.

The President welcomed the recent accession of the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yand Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. The President and His Majesty also look forward to cooperating with other ASEAN partners in supporting the proposed regional counterterrorism center in Malaysia.

President Bush expressed appreciation for Brunei Darussalam's contribution toward the humanitarian relief efforts and reconstruction of Afghanistan. Such contributions demonstrate the compassion of the Government and people of Brunei in its commitment to build a peaceful, prosperous Afghanistan.

The President and His Majesty welcomed the growing, mutually beneficial bilateral defense relationship between the United States and Brunei Darussalam, and reaffirmed their desire to see such cooperation increase.

The two leaders agreed on the importance of a strong and united ASEAN, and President Bush offered all appropriate assistance to support capacity-building within ASEAN. President Bush praised Brunei Darussalam's strong leadership role in ASEAN in recent years, and reaffirmed our commitment to expand U.S. engagement with ASEAN as a pillar of stability in Southeast Asia. The two leaders agreed on the importance of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and APEC in promoting regional stability and prosperity. The President welcomed Brunei Darussalam's support for our Secure Trade in the APEC Region, or "STAR," initiative, aimed at transforming the movement of goods and people to increase both security and economic competitiveness. The President pledged to work with the Government of Brunei Darussalam to assist Brunei Darussalam in building its own capacity to provide increased border and customs security and efficiency.

His Majesty welcomed President Bush's Enterprise for ASEAN Initiative, or "EAI," as an initiative designed to promote increased investment, economic growth, and free trade between the United States and ASEAN countries. The President and His Majesty welcomed the signing of a bilateral Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA). This TIFA will provide the foundation for increased trade and economic cooperation between Brunei Darussalam and the United States as both economies adapt to the economic challenges of the 21st century. The two sides agreed to coordinate their efforts bilaterally, regionally, and multilaterally, including working together to complete successfully the Doha Development Agenda.